

THE FIRST PROTESTANT MARTYR, Robert Jermain THOMAS. 1866

ROBERT JERMAIN THOMAS. Born, Sept. 7, 1839, at Rhayader, Radnorshire. Church Member, Hanover. Mon., 1854. Studied at New College, London, where he joined Westminster Chapel under Rev. Samuel Martin. Appointed to Shanghai. Sailed on July 21, 1863, arriving at Shanghai early in December, 1863.

-- Extract, Candidates' Papers, London Missionary Society.

"...as to the Missionary's general qualifications I think he should be prudent, self-sacrificing, endowed with indomitable perseverance, that he should avoid 'the foolish and unlearned questions of the heathen; in Chapel and street preaching the simple gospel, that he should watch in all things, endure afflictions and do the work of an evangelist."

-- From Thomas's Candidates' Answers to Questions, London Missionary Society Candidates' Papers

Extracts from L.M.S. letter files:

"My dear Dr. Tidman. I little thought when we left England that the first letter from myself to you would contain the mournful tidings it now falls to my lot to communicate. My dear wife died on the 24th of last month. The event has quite prostrated me....

My heart is well nigh broken. I must seek somewhere a complete change...."

- Thomas to Tidman, London Mission, Shanghai, Apr 5, 1864.

".... a station should be opened at Wu-chang-fu.. I am ready to go there... The life in Shanghai for a young missionary is not very satisfactory. There are too many interruptions... My earnest desire is to live amongst the Chinese..."

- Thomas to Tidman, Lond. Mission, Shanghai, May 15, 1864

"My dear Mr. Muirhead. I think it due to you as chief of the London Mission, in view of my acquaintance with you, to state that I have given an appointment in the customs to Mr. Thomas, who this morning informed me that he had yesterday resigned and that his resignation had been accepted by the Committee.

It would be out of place for me to make any comment on Mr. Thomas' action in resigning, or on the circumstances which induced him to decide to do so. I would merely state that while I am not sorry to get so promising a linguist for our service, I likewise think that for a man with any Missionary spirit in him, there is an opening in the customs for doing great work in an indirect way, and for influencing a class of mind that is not generally accessible.

- Sir Robert Hart to Muirhead, Inspector General's Office, Dec. 8, 1864

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"... I presume you will be aware that my views of Mission work differ from those of Mr. Muirhead.. ebullitions of feeling have taken place which have necessarily interfered with that harmony which should prevail between missionaries living under the same roof.

"Owing..to recent uncalled for, unauthorized dictatorial measures adopted by Mr. Muirhead and the vain hope of being removed to a more congenial station I must beg to tender my resignation..."

- Thomas to Tidman, Shanghai, Dec. 8, 1864.

"... Persons who do not know me may allege that I was desirous of making money. True in my present position, one of very little toil, I am paid £600 with quarters and in two years am promised \$1500 per annum at least. I would far rather be in the Mission, were double these salaries offered me.

"Last spring at Shanghai a plan for the establishment of an Anglo-Chinese school was brought up by one of the higher Chinese officials--the salary of the English master for attendance in the morning only was fixed at £500 per annum. One condition, not a word about Christianity! Mr. Muirhead, notwithstanding this prohibition against the mention of Christianity, urged me repeatedly to take charge of the school.

"I refused on two grounds, or rather three, I didn't want money, I wouldn't be bound in the scope of my teaching, I couldn't take such a step without consulting the wishes of the Society!... What then are the circumstances which more immediately determined me to leave the Shanghai Mission.

"1. Muirhead...threatened me with withdrawal of salary if I didn't take the English service whenever he requested me. I persistently refused.. I have no sympathy with what is not a "Mission Church", but "Muirhead's Church"; he got it up, appointed his deacons, himself Pastor on a certain salary, of £1000 per annum... he was the salaried pastor and he wanted me to be his unsalaried assistant. I refused....

"I resigned and Mr. Hart gave me the post of only interpreter at Chefoo. I can leave this service honorably by giving a month's notice..."

"I ~~solemnly state that my heart~~ do not allow myself to fall into the easy error of supposing that an interpreter or Commissioner of the Chinese Customs can give himself to the work of doing good to the Chinese as a Missionary can.

"M...my heart is in the work. I love it. I like China and the Chinese. I never had the slightest intention of leaving the London M. Society till these sad disagreements took place last month..."

"Will the Board forgive the past and receive me back.. I was rash, too independent and with contrition I say so.....

- Thomas to Tidman, Chefoo (Tent'ai), Jan. 31, 1865



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"...Thomas is at Chefoo, waiting, it is said, to come on north. We know that last year he refused a lucrative post under the Chinese Govt. at Shanghai, and his present course perplexes us... He won golden opinions from almost all. His linguistic power is undoubtedly very great. I cannot judge of other qualifications, but in this respect he bade fair to take a high rank among us. Our work seemed to be his play. And his uniform courtesy and kindly spirit made some of us who had previously felt somewhat doubtful of him, look forward with hope to the future.."

--Extract, letter, Jonathan Lees, Tientsin, Feb. 8, 1865.

"By this time you will in all probability have received Mr. Thomas' resignation, and also been made aware of the fact that he has been appointed to this Port as assistant Interpreter to the Customs. He arrived here 8 or 10 days ago...

"I expressed my regret at what he had done... I think he has acted without due consideration.. At the same time I am fully persuaded that he is a Christian man, and that he is perfectly sincere in his desire to serve Christ in missionary work... He has very great pecuniary inducements to remain where he is. The Customs greatly need such men, and they are flattering him very much. Still he is most anxious to return. I know well that he has been misunderstood, and am afraid this is at the foundation of all. You know his abilities and temperament. He has made very great progress in the language. And I am fully persuaded that he is a young man capable of doing great service to the cause of truth in this Empire...

-- Alexander Williamson to Dr. Tidman, Chefoo, Jan. 25, 1865.

"P.S. ...If you were thinking of re-opening your Mongolian Mission he might do well for it as he knows the Russian and has a liking for the Mongols. A.W." - Same.

"... I pressed you about English work to a small extent, on the ground that all Missionaries more or less had to do it in China, and that I had been dragged into it from Medhurst's time. You refused point blank.. You further said that if all the Missionaries hitherto had done work of this kind, you would go against all the missionaries.. Yet I do most emphatically deny that I threatened to "stop your salary" on that account or aught else...

P.S. ... You charged me with undue severity to them (converts and inquirers), standing aloof from them, etc... I was not at all sensible of having treated these native brethren unkindly or harshly. Most gladly have I wished to live amongst them and be identified with them. This magnificent house is a continual eyesore to me on this account. But so long as I have had charge of the Society's money, and had to pay the Assistants, etc., I have always found many of them a source of trouble on this head. Conscientious as to the amount I gave as compared with their ordinary habits of living, they have been clamorous for more. I remember well Dr. Medhurst's parsimony on the matter, and Dr. Tidman said to me on



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one occasion that Mr. Dyer's fault amid his excellencies was his giving away to the Chinaman in almost everything...

--Wm. Muirhead to Thomas. Shanghai. Apr. 27, 1865

"My dear Dr. Tidman. I arrived here a week to-day and only then learned the blessed news that I had been appointed to this most interesting Mission. You will doubtless have heard of my mission to Korea. Appreciating fully the difficulties and delays which were to be met before an answer of any kind could arrive from the Society; in conjunction with the Rev. A. Williamson of the N. B. S. of Scotland I resolved to proceed to the West coast of Korea, a country utterly unknown to any but Catholic missionaries. I left Chefoo on the fourth of September on board a small Chinese junk and arrived off the mainland of Korea on the thirteenth. We spent two months and a half on the coast. I had acquired thro' the assistance of a Korean Roman Catholic sufficient knowledge of the colloquial to announce to these poor people some of the most precious truths of the Gospel. They are, as a whole, very hostile to foreigners, but by a little chat in their own language I could persuade them to accept a book or two. As these books are taken at the risk of decapitation or at least fines and imprisonment, it is quite fair to conclude that the possessors wish to read them. The storms that blew along the West Coast of Korea this last autumn, according to the testimony of Chinese pilots who have traded with Korea for twenty years, have been unparalleled. I should fatigue, were I to narrate our hairbreadth escapes. A gracious Providence preserved us. I had intended visiting the Capital, Wang-King, but the Korean junk in which I had taken passage was dashed to pieces by one of these terrible gales. No life lost. Leaving Korea in the beginning of December I landed on the coast of Manchuria and found that I had only escaped the dangers of the sea to fall perhaps into those on land. You are aware that the entire country of Manchuria is in a state of agitation. Long since small bands of mounted robbers were the terror of the lonely highways of the far east. Latterly these bands have combined together and assumed such alarming proportions as to characterize the movement a downright rebellion. I landed at a port called Pi-tz-Wo, two days after leaving, it was occupied by rebels. I had spent three very pleasant days in distributing the Scriptures and preaching the Gospel. The people were more than merely civil and attentive. A Mohammedan named Li Kwo Fa bought a copy of each kind of book I had and insisted on sending me dinner, daily, free of expense!

Passing through Kaichou I arrived at Yingtsz (Newchwang) where I was very hospitably entertained by H.B.M.'s Consul, T. Taylor Meadows Esq. Thence travelling partly on horseback and part of the time in carts, rounding the northern part of the Gulf of Liau Tung and passing Great Wall at Shan Hai Kwan I entered the Province of Chili and breathed freely, for thither the robbers could not follow us. The Chinese Government had despatched some four thousand troops to tranquilize Manchuria.

To sum up, I have been four months away from European Society

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and travelled by sea and land nearly two thousand miles. I am well acquainted with the coast of two Western provinces of Corea and have made numerous vocabularies and dialogues in the colloquial of the Capital which will be useful in any future negotiations with that people.....

Next week I purpose commencing in earnest a course of study which will fit me for the Chinese pulpit.

With kind regards to the Directors,  
Believe me, dear Dr. Tidman,  
Very sincerely yours,  
R. Jermain Thomas"

--Thomas to Tidman, London Mission, Peking. Jan. 12, 1866

"The annual Korean embassy has just departed. It has been my lot to mix more intimately with its members than any other foreigner in Peking. Some knowledge of their language and country procured me a ready admission to their official residence. It is doubtless known to you that there are eleven Roman Catholic missionaries at present residing in Corea, who number their converts by thousands.

"Whilst in Corea I made the acquaintance of sever, who, like their brethren in China, whilst showing great devotion to the dogmas of the Papal Church and its agents, would not tolerate for an instant the simplicity of our purer faith. I found them always forewarned against heretics. Since the treaty of Tientsin European missionaries and their converts have enjoyed comparative peace in Corea. There exist to the present day a Japanese garrison in the town of Tung-lai, a small port in the South eastern province of Ch'ing shang. Were the Greek Church as untiring and dauntless in its efforts to spread the 'orthodox' faith, she would prove a dangerous rival to the Church of Rome. The enormous piece of Manchuria ceded to the Czar five years ago by the discomfited Chinese has for its South Western boundary the Harbour of Passiet, distant but a score of miles from a Korean town. Already many Korean families passing the Ten-man river, have quietly settled down on Russian soil. Alas, the rule of Russia is many soldiers, few merchants, no missionaries.

"A missionary spirit in these latter days seems to be taking hold of some minds; hence renewed activity among the Mongols.

"But what strange indifference or scepticism that leaves the whole of Manchuria to the care of priests of a church whose property they have confiscated in Poland.

"Humanly speaking, the Koreans are not at all opposed to the truths of Christianity. The weak hold Indian Buddhism has upon the educated classes in China is still more feeble in Corea. I am certain of the fact that our religious books are read with avidity. Curiously enough books that I had distributed on the West coast last autumn found their way to Ping-Jang the picturesque and populous provincial capital of Ping-An. A merchant named Pakka who accompanied



Thomas 6 6 6 6 6 6  
Protestants

the embassy here this winter, told me a few days since that he had obtained one of our books at Ping-Jang and had carefully perused it. he said in Korean, 'Yasu Kyo chèiki meu choosoida' - the books of the doctrine of Jesus are indeed excellent. The Chinese literary style is well understood and exclusively used by the educated classes in Korea. They have however a syllabary for their own colloquial which is universally understood. The Roman Catholics have translated their series of catechism, breviary, etc. into most idiomatic colloquial, using of course the native character. So perfectly however do literary men possess Chinese that there would be little difficulty in translating our books into a character and language understood by boys and girls throughout the whole country for the dialectic differences are inconsiderable in the eight provinces. It is a significant fact that there are no Buddhist temples inside any Korean town. As missions abroad, in spite of what cavillers may say, let to mission efforts at home, so in this wonderful centre of heathenism, schemes for the introduction of Protestant Christianity in Japan, Corea and Mongolia, will all tend to work upon the minds of our native converts especially, and upon the people at large.

"The only opposition met with here now is the blinding pride of man's desperately wicked heart. Peking with its Manchus, Mongols, Tartars, Coreans, Tibetans and Chino-Turks is far more tolerant of us than Hankow or Canton.

"You will naturally expect that since my appointment to this station, some effort has been made to extend mission operations. I am happy to inform you that the long search for a home, suitable for a preaching station, in the Chinese city has at last been successful. An old Su-chow convert of Mr. Edkins has found us a convenient spot in a densely populated neighbourhood. Hitherto our preaching has been much confined to congregations of pure Pekingese. The extraordinary advantages for the spread of the Gospel resulting from the more or less brief sojourn in the outer city, of natives from the eighteen provinces have not thoroughly been made use of. With God's blessing we trust to spread by means of our new stations, the tidings of Christ's salvation to many a dark corner of this empire... We know that it is an easy thing for the Holy Spirit to lead men to see their need of a Saviour; and humbly thankful are we that there are not infrequently additions made to our little church of 'such' as we have every reason to hope will be saved.....

-- Thomas to Tidman, London Mission, Peking, Apr. 4, 1866

"Whilst we are startled with the news of war in Europe, countries nearer at hand, well nigh ignored at home, are occupying our attention. A foul and wicked massacre has recently taken place in Korea.

"Two Roman Catholic Bishops and seven missionaries have been barbarously tortured and then beheaded. For many years these devoted agents of the Papacy have hidden themselves in that almost unknown and strictly watched kingdom.

"A little over a month ago a Native Korean junk was seen



entering the harbour with a French Tricolour at its fore mast. It brought the French missionary Father Ridel and a crew of Koreans all, save two, Christians. According to Father Ridel's account this massacre was caused by the ominous advance of Russian power on the North East frontier of Korea. Other accounts assert that the Catholics were plotting secretly the overthrow of the government. It is certain the nominal adherents of Catholicism in Korea amount to some thousands. At the capital, Wang-Ching, the Bishop had established a college, set up a printing press for native books, had spent many years in compiling a Chinese-Korean-Latin Dictionary and works bearing on the history, resources and geography of Korea. All these, so Father Ridel tells me, have been burned and also all the missals, catechisms etc. already used for years composed in the colloquial of the country and elegantly printed in the native character. Last year when in Korea I procured a complete set of these latter works, which will be of great use in the ultimate compiling of purer elementary Christian works.

"When the sad news of the wholesale murder of these missionaries reached us in Peking, the French ambassador immediately resolved, in concert with the French Admiral, who had just left the Capital for Tientsin, to send an expedition immediately to rescue two missionaries who are supposed to be living amongst the Korean mountains, to demand satisfaction for the massacre, and to open Corea, closed for so many hundred years, to the commerce of the West.

"The missionaries in Peking, surely one of the noblest mission fields in the Far East, cannot see with indifference the embassies which arrive once or twice a year from all parts of Asia, Koreans, Mongols and Tibetans mingle freely with us. The people of Korea, on good testimony, are more accessible to Christian truth than either of the others. Buddhism is weaker in Korea than in China. The Chinese character is understood better in all parts of Korea by the lower classes than in the north of China. Religious books were distributed by me last year all along the West coast. In January of this year a note in Chinese was put into my hand by a member of the Korean Embassy in Peking begging a copy of Matthew's Gospel, like that a foreigner had distributed on the coast of Korea. These facts speak for themselves. It does not dissipate our force to extend the influence of the Word of God. In my spare hours I have diligently kept up my acquaintance with the Korean vernacular. Little did I think that, last year tempest tossed along a dangerous and inhospitable shore, I should have the honour of being the first Protestant missionary to visit Korea. The French Ambassador has requested me to accompany the Admiral, and I am the only foreigner living who is acquainted with the coast and who has a general acquaintance with the language. Mr. Edkins fully and entirely agreed with me that it was better to leave immediately for Chefoo. On arriving at Tientsin, I was told by the French Consul that a little insurrection having taken place in Saigon, the Admiral had left Chefoo for Hong Kong, but would probably return in a month. I resolved to proceed to Chefoo not wishing to pass any time idly here, I have accepted a passage over to Korea, in the schooner of a friendly English merchant. I take a good supply of books with me and am quite sanguine that I shall be welcomed by the people. I hope to meet the Admiral's frigate on the Korean coast.

Thomas 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8

"Our work is progressing so fast, under God's blessing in Peking that I was very loth to leave it for even a few weeks. But the representations of Mr. Edkins and all the other missionaries, of the importance of a Protestant Missionary presenting himself in the country at once, led me to take a step which may subsequently exercise a most beneficial reflex action on our mission in the Capital. Trusting the Directors will approve of our efforts to spread the doctrines of the Bible unmixed with human error, in this unknown land.

Believe me, Dear Dr. Tidman,  
Very sincerely yours,  
R. Jermain Thomas  
--LMS, North China Letters, Thomas to Tidman, Chefoo,  
August 1st, 1866

"Private. Mr. Thomas left for Chefoo last week, on account of the knowledge he had acquired of the Corean language and his acquaintance with the coast, he was urged by the resident Charge d'affaires of the French Government to go and see the French Admiral who is resolved to visit Corea with a hostile force. Nine Missionaries including two French bishops and seven French missionaries have recently been beheaded by the Corean government. The French contemplate opening Corea to foreign trade and placing a new prince on the throne. They will also punish the officers of Government who commanded or procured the execution of the missionaries. The French Admiral will probably ask Thomas to go as interpreter. He has no interpreter except a refugee missionary, who having lived in extreme quietude hidden among the converts, is not likely to have the local knowledge which Thomas acquired during his three months on the Coast. Besides, we are told at the French Legation that the Admiral does not trust the French clergy and as it is supposed that they are viewed by the Coreans as political intriguers, the admiral would be glad to have as an interpreter a person not belonging to the French clergy.

"Some think, however, that Thomas on account of his being an Englishman and Protestant will not be pressed by the Admiral to go. In that case he will return to Peking at once.

"Under the circumstances I could not advise Mr. T. not to go to Chefoo for it may lead to results most interesting to the supporters our Society at home. Thinking that the missionary aspect of his visit to Corea is very important I sent with him a young Chinese student who will be useful in affording Christian instruction throughout the journey to those willing to receive it.

I remain  
Faithfully yours,  
J. Edkins

Mr. Thomas has refused any remuneration.

-- Extract from Joseph Edkins  
July 25, 1866, Peking



Thomas 9 9 9 9 9 9

"At a Committee meeting held this morning at which Mr. Lees and Mr. Muirhead, with Dr. Dudgeon and myself were present, it was resolved that Rev. R. J. Thomas having proceeded to Corea without the concurrence of the Committee, the Secretary is requested to write to Dr. Mullens expressing regret at the circumstance, but deferring any further record of their opinion till his return...

"... By the time he had reached Chefoo circumstances had changed. The French admiral had gone to Saigon and Mr. T's course should have been to return here. So it appears to us...

".. Our anxiety is somewhat increased by the circumstance that his name has been introduced in a Shanghai newspaper paragraph where it is said that he accompanied an armed mercantile vessel to the coast of Corea. In the present alarm felt in Corea in the fear of a French invasion, any European appearing on the coast would be regarded with extreme suspicion, and be liable to capture and ill usage. We fear that this state of things would preclude the discharge of missionary labours and render the journey fruitless in this point of view."

J. Edkins

-- Edkins to Mullens, extract. Peking, Sept. 10, 1866

"A few days since he (the French Admiral on return from survey of Corea coast preparatory to warlike operations) sent a gunboat to Chefoo bringing the painful intelligence that the General Sherman the ship in which Mr. Thomas embarked for Corea had been wrecked on the coast of that country. The admiral probably received the information from his pilot who landed and came back to the ship and from non-official natives with whom he met. The account adds that the Coreans murdered those on board and burnt the vessel. It is surmised that Mr. Thomas having a Corean dress and speaking the language may have escaped. One report that has reached us states this as one of the circumstances in this melancholy story. We anxiously wait for further information which may be received in a few days. Our distress is increased on account of a promising young native helper, a native of Peking, who accompanied Mr. Thomas....

"A few weeks previously the crew of a shipwrecked vessel were received kindly by the Coreans and conducted in comfort through the country to Chinese territory where they were treated with much indignity and indeed cruelty by the Chinese.

"It is probably therefore that the unhappy fate of those on board the General Sherman was an act of the Corean Government occasioned by fear of the French and the uneasy feeling excited by his surveying visit...."

-- J. Edkins to Mullens. Peking, Oct. 13, 1866

"We have read with interest your notices of Corea as a field for missionary enterprise. The Romish priests seem to have been very active... It would be honourable to the zeal and enterprise of any body of Protestant Christians to take up this inviting field; but until the number of our Missionaries in China proper is considerably

Thomas 10 10 10 10 10

increased, we should for ourselves be compelled to decline entering upon Corea. If done at all, it ought to be done effectually. Under existing circumstances we consider that Peking is, and for some time to come will be, your appropriate sphere....

".. The request of the French authorities in Peking that you should proceed to Corea in the capacity of Interpreter to the French Expedition was certainly entitled to consideration... But there were powerful reasons against your going. If the Admiral doubted whether a Priest as Interpreter would give him a correct view of all the facts, that was a strong argument against your mixing yourself up with the matter.. The avowed object of the French Expedition was to demand satisfaction, and if necessary make reprisals for the barbarous massacre of the Romish priests. We are not surprised that the French authorities felt called upon to seek such satisfaction; but the Directors are of opinion that, in joining the Expedition, you were voluntarily placing yourself in a very ambiguous position, as between the French and the Coreans. And then as to your wish to use so favourable an opportunity for extending your intercourse with the Natives for the purpose of bespeaking their attention to the things which concern their everlasting welfare, how could you hope, in the midst of their excitement and their fears of the Expedition, that they would listen to the Gospel of peace from one who appeared as an official among the men with whom they were at war. Still more when you found..that the Admiral had gone South.. for you to go forward to Corea in an armed vessel and to put yourself in danger uncalled (for), was nothing short of rashness, and an entire disregard of the duty which binds you to a definite sphere of labour and a definite place of abode. The Directors have carefully considered the whole matter.. Their resolution is as follows:-

"That..the Directors think that Mr. Thomas acted unwisely.. In any case the position offered could only embarrass him as a Protestant Missionary and mix him up with the political affairs of another Nation; and in the present excited condition of the Corean people he was not likely to find any opening for purely Missionary work. The Board therefore desire Mr. Thomas to return without delay to his own station, Peking, and to adhere to his proper work..

"Hoping that you will at once return to Peking and resume your proper duties, and that you will not quit them again without due authority.

Believe me,

My dear Mr. Thomas,

Very truly yours,

Joseph Mullens, Foreign Secretary of the Lond M. Soc.

--Mullens to Thomas, Dec. 10, 1866. Outgoing Letters - China, Book 6, p. 305.

"And though the matter is already half forgotten, I must refer first to the loss which the Society has sustained by the death of Mr. Thomas, if only to assure you my colleague and myself did all in our power to prevent his taking the course which proved so disastrous to himself and so dishonorable to the Missionary name. We were astonished at his sudden arrival here 'en route' for Chefoo...

(over)



\* Sources and Materials on the Rev. Robert Jermain Thomas.

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THOMAS LETTERS

from Miss I. M. Fletcher  
Whanaia  
London Missionary Society

London Mission

Peking

April 24<sup>th</sup> 1866

My dear Dr. Williams,

The annual Korean embassy has just departed. It has been my lot to have mixed more intimately with its members than any other foreigner in Peking. Some knowledge of their language and customs secured me a ready admission to their official residence. It is doubtless known to you that the Roman Catholic missionaries at present residing in Corea, who number their converts by thousands, which in Corea I made the acquaintance of several, who, like their brethren in China, exhibit a most devoted adherence to the dogmas of the Papal Church & its agents, and not without for an instance the simplicity of our pure faith. I found them always forewarned against heresies. Since the treaty of Shimonoseki European missionaries & their converts have enjoyed comparative peace in Corea. Before Japan was opened it was by the Chinese, Roman missionaries to work their way to that country through the southern provinces of Corea, there which to the present day a Japanese garrison in the town of Tung-Lai & some forts in the south eastern provinces of China.



know them. As missions abroad, in spite of the  
scattered ones, as to mission efforts at home,  
so in the wonderful centre of Southernism, schemes  
for the introduction of Protestant Christianity in  
Japan, Corea, & Mongolia, will all tend to work  
upon the minds of our native converts especially,  
& upon the people at large.

The only objection met with here  
now is the bleeding back of man's despondency  
winded heart. Peking with its Manchus  
Mongols, Tartars, Koreans, & Chinese-Turks  
is far more tolerant of us than Hankow  
or Canton.

You will naturally expect that since  
my appointment to this station, some effort has  
been made to extend mission operations  
& I am happy to inform you that the long  
search for a house, suitable for a preaching station,  
in the Chinese city has at last been  
successful. An old man, convert of Mr. Estlin  
has found us a convenient spot in a  
very populous neighbourhood. Hitherto our  
preaching has been much confined to our

grievous & have <sup>2</sup>persecuted. The extraordinary ad-  
vantages <sup>from the more or less</sup> resulting from the more or less  
ranked <sup>from the more or less</sup> resulting from the more or less  
brief service in the outer city of natives from  
the eighteen provinces have not thoroughly  
I made use of. With God's blessing we trust  
to spread, by means of our new station, the tidings  
of Christ's salvation to many a dark corner of  
this empire. "It is difficult to convert men," is  
a common Chinese saying. There we to rest con-  
-tent with a mere nominal acknowledgment  
of Christ, nothing would be easier than to  
insinuate <sup>in our churches</sup> the names of a multitude of such  
converts. We know that <sup>it</sup> is an easy thing for  
the Holy Spirit to lead men to see their need,  
a Saviour; & humbly thankful are we that  
there are such ever increasing additions made to  
our little church of "saints," as we have expressed  
in hope.

It will interest you to hear  
of a vessel made of J. Martin to <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~  
H'ri-Long-Su the capital of the new, well known  
in Europe, since the visit of the Dutch more than  
a century ago, as a result of a treaty.



Persecution, floods, & many other afflictions have  
come upon it, decreasing & impoverishing it.

Dr. Martin visited the colony in February

look & found that their synagogues had been  
sold - "The tabernacle, between their fathers had"

"Leather have covered out it. If there is one among  
them with a remnant of the faith of his forefathers

walls may the remembrance be "Noe is one, for ever there;

my wound is grievous: but I said truly this is a grief  
& I must bear it. My tabernacle is spoiled & all

my cords are broken: my children are gone forth  
of me & they are not: there is none to stretch forth

your tent any more, & to set up my curtains.

Man the tidings of a messiah, Christ  
the king, Jesus the son of David reclaim these

"Lark sheeps of the House of Israel.

I remain, dear Dr. Selman,

Very sincerely Yours,

R. Jeremiah Knickerbocker

W. Thomas. King.

Dated April 14. 1866.

Received July 12 "

Answered Dec. 10 "

1. ~~Review~~. Note of the Roman Catholic priests in Corea. Books they have prepared. Spirit of the people favourable to the Gospel.
2. Opening of the new Stations in the Chinese City.
3. Dr. Martin's recent visits to the Jews in Kai-fung-foo. The Synagogue sold!... M.

W. L. L. L.



Peking, June 12. 1866.

A. J. Thomas.

W. S. ...

Received, March 10<sup>th</sup> 1866.

London Mission,  
Peking,  
Jan 12<sup>th</sup> / 68.

My dear Dr. Lidman,  
I arrived here  
a week today & only then learned the  
pleasant news that I was had been  
appointed to this most interesting  
Mission. You will doubtless have heard  
of our mission tour to Corea. Approaching  
fully the difficulties & delays which were  
to be met before an answer of any  
kind could arrive; in conjunction  
with the Rev. A. Williamson of the  
S. B. S. & Colton I agreed to proceed  
to the two as a substitute, Scriptures  
of the West Coast of Corea - a country  
utterly unknown to any but a few  
missionaries. I left Peking on the  
24<sup>th</sup> & after a short stay in a small  
Chin's port & a cruise off the mainland  
at home in the straits. We spent  
two months & a half on the coast. I



had acquired thro' the assistance of  
a Chinese Roman Catholic sufficient  
knowledge of the idiom to announce  
to these poor people some of the most  
precious truths of the Gospel. They  
are, as a whole, very hostile to foreigners  
but by a little chat in their own language  
I could persuade them to accept a book  
or two. As these books are taken at  
the risk of decapitation or at least flogging  
& imprisonment, it is quite fair to  
conclude that the possessors will  
be glad to read them. The storms that blew  
along the West coast of Corea this last  
Autumn, according to the testimony  
of Chinese pilots who have traded well  
along for twenty years, have been unparalleled  
I should judge, since I to mention our  
hardship except. A gracious Providence  
preserved us. I had intended visiting  
the Capital. "Mang King" has the same  
plague in the "Red" taken a severe  
ill was almost choked by one of these  
terrible gales. He left the "Red" in  
in the beginning of December & landed

In the event, Manchuria I found that  
I had only created the danger; the sea  
to get things into that as well. We  
are aware that the entire country of  
Manchuria is in a state of agitation  
by some small band, mounted  
borders were the border, the only  
highways, the far east. Latterly these  
bands have combined together & assumed  
such alarming proportions as to char-  
acterize the movement a downright  
rebellion. I landed at a port called  
P. G. No. two days after leaving, it was  
occupied by the rebels. I had spent these  
very pleasant days in studying the  
Scriptures & preaching the Gospel. The  
people were more than usual, civil &  
attentive. A Mohammedan named Li Kuo  
Li bought a copy, and kind of book  
I had a mission on Sunday one dinner  
daily, free of expense.

Passing through Kailashan  
I arrived at Linzi, (Hsiao-chowang)  
where I was very cordially welcomed  
by H. B. M. ...



Chong leaving early on Tuesday  
at 10 AM, the time in early morning  
the Southern part, the gulf yesterday  
& leaving the great Wall at New Hai  
Kuan & entered the Province, Chide  
& treated very well, the other  
could not allow us. The Chinese  
Government had dispatched some four  
thousand troops to tranquillize Manchou  
we saw up & have been  
four months away from Peking  
& travelled by sea & land nearly two  
thousand miles. I am well acquainted  
the evening, two months, Province,  
Cone & have made numerous speeches  
& charges in the colloquial, the  
Capital wh. will be useful in any  
future negotiations with that people.  
I can only express to you  
how glad I am to be here. By God's  
help I will try to keep good, the  
hundred wh. I'm thinking for some  
to come so well. I wish to express  
gratitude to the Lord my grateful

Thanks for their kindness. Will you  
so accept my best thanks for the  
kind, encouraging words you have ut-  
tered, some time to time sending the  
millions of the world.

Two days ago at Martin  
an American gentleman, who me  
whether I would consent to take charge  
of the Anglo-Spanish school attached  
to the Legation Office in this city. There  
are but six pupils who require at-  
tention, & two hours daily & the salary  
is one thousand dollars per annum.  
I at once declined the offer, but  
it is my duty to report the circumstance  
to you. Can I ask the opinion of the  
Board of Directors? Unquestionably it is  
an admirable school, where a young  
missionary could not but progress well  
in his elementary French studies.

With the approval of Mr. Adams  
I offered to assist at Martin, but being  
two opposite systems of instruction desired  
of the General Assembly the American  
missionary could not take the school.



The first week a man evidently  
there has necessarily been taken up  
in making the usual case in the  
general incident. "Yes" with prayer  
"I'll be on my knees" "I'll be on my knees"  
well attended.

Next week I purpose con-  
vening in earnest a course, study  
which will fit me for the Christian path.  
With kind regards to the  
Believe me, dear Mother,  
Very sincerely yours  
A. L. ...

Oh! Mother, how you will excuse  
the hurried letter, I do not wish to  
allow another chance will be  
without saying you & your

Peking. Oct 13. 1886

My dear Mr. [Name]

I have just returned from the Man-  
golian journey undertaken in pursuance of  
a resolution of the Committee held when  
you were here a year ago. I had Mr  
Murchison and Mr. [Name] with me of the  
party. We reached Kwei kwa cheng a large  
city 400 miles from Peking and visited  
Kalgan on the way.

I hasten to speak of the painful news re-  
ceived on our return here yesterday. I  
I much admired on his return from  
Lochin China. [Name] is the Korean  
Coast to [Name], preparatory to the  
military operations he intends to commence  
in [Name]. He has collected a sufficient num-  
ber of ships and [Name].  
A few days since [Name] <sup>sent a gunboat to</sup> [Name] and  
[Name] bringing the painful intelli-  
gence that the [Name] [Name] the  
ship in which [Name] [Name] embarked



know of the vessel that his parents,  
sister and brother will be listed in  
in the passport book of our station  
at Simon.

Should you write to them or should  
they seek information from you, they  
should know that we still have no  
hope. Mr Thomas would be very un-  
able to the Council as being a foreign  
person information and his presence  
does would favour his temporary

absence.

You will remember that in Apr  
Haking in July at the request of the  
Chargé d'affaires to go to  
Cairo and place himself at the  
disposal of the French Admiral.  
As an interpreter the Admiral there  
he proceeded to Cairo as soon  
as possible in the General Thomas.

I enclose the journal of our  
Meyohian journey to ...  
opportunity.

I remain, yours faithfully,  
Joseph Bellin





Fletcher, I. M. "The Record of the Reverend R. Jeremiah Thomas as found in the Archives of the L.M.S."  
ms., compiled Aug. 1958

From Candidates' Papers; Western Committee Minutes: China; Deputation to India and China, 1865;  
Central China letters (Box A. 2.3, B. 2.3), North China letters (A. 4.1, B. 4.1), Singing letters China,  
North China letters (A. 5.1, B. 5.1, C. 5.1).

Letters on 1865 trip to Korea: Jan. 12, 1866 (p. 36 f.), Apr. 4, 1866 (p. 36-17).

Letter to go again: Aug. 1, 1866 (p. 41 f.).

Report on death: J. Williams to Williams. Oct 13, 1866 (p. 45)

Common Safety - Chang Woon-Sup  
 Engled Ash - Woon  
 Interest - Shim Progo  
 Interest - P.K. Min  
 Interest - Cho Chong-Nam  
 Interest - K.C. Kim

Robert Jermain Thomas

H.M. Kim 55-2111  
 (9) 22-5314

About the middle of August, 1866, an American schooner, the General Sherman, <sup>carrying cotton cloth, glass and tin-plate.</sup> crossed its way into the mouth of the Taedong River. Deceived by a combination of exceptionally high tide and flood, and lured by hope of trade with the forbidden ancient capital, Pyongyang, thirty miles <sup>inland</sup> upstream, it proceeded upriver. It never came back down. It completely disappeared with its entire complement <sup>of</sup> twenty ~~three~~ <sup>two</sup> men, <sup>including</sup> ~~officers and crew~~, and one Welsh missionary, the Rev. Robert Jermain Thomas.

<sup>the next</sup> <sup>two</sup> years, <sup>I have</sup> the American government sought in vain to learn the fate of the Sherman. Its minister <sup>to</sup> China, Amson, <sup>by the Korean gov.</sup> was ~~first~~ blandly told that, yes, a ship had <sup>been</sup> ~~been~~ <sup>at</sup> ~~on~~ the Taedong, but that it was British. At the same time he was <sup>belliciously</sup> warned that Korea would repel all foreign invaders.

Two naval ships were dispatched to investigate, and if possible rescue ~~any~~ survivors. ~~The~~ <sup>fact</sup> the U.S.S. Albatross, reaching Korea in June 1867, could not even find the Taedong River and returned in frustration <sup>but reported</sup> that the ransom <sup>along</sup> ~~the~~ coast was that the Sherman <sup>even</sup> ~~had~~ <sup>been</sup> ~~all~~ <sup>been</sup> ~~killed~~.

A year later, the U.S.S. Shenandoah, <sup>made another attempt to find out what had happened.</sup> at least <sup>got</sup> ~~into~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~light~~ <sup>river</sup>, but came back only with another miserable story. <sup>It</sup> ~~was~~ <sup>reputedly</sup> ~~known~~ <sup>agreed</sup> ~~however~~, that there were no survivors, and with the acceptance of that fact, <sup>about</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>fact</sup> ~~that~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~loss~~.

had become the first Protestant martyr in Korea.

~~An unlikely candidate~~ <sup>of</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>naughty</sup> ~~missionary~~.

Some <sup>colloquial</sup> ~~colloquial~~ <sup>accounts</sup> ~~accounts~~ of his <sup>missionary</sup> ~~missionary~~ <sup>work</sup> ~~work~~ in Korea <sup>are</sup> ~~are~~ <sup>almost</sup> ~~almost~~ <sup>universally</sup> ~~universally~~ <sup>known</sup> ~~known~~ but I <sup>think</sup> ~~think~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>best</sup> ~~best~~ <sup>source</sup> ~~source~~ <sup>is</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>book</sup> ~~book~~ <sup>by</sup> ~~by~~ <sup>Thomas</sup> ~~Thomas~~ <sup>himself</sup> ~~himself~~.

<sup>though</sup> ~~he~~ <sup>was</sup> ~~an~~ <sup>unlikely</sup> ~~candidate~~ <sup>for</sup> ~~that~~ <sup>honor</sup>. <sup>At</sup> ~~least~~ <sup>one</sup> <sup>time</sup> <sup>he</sup> <sup>was</sup> <sup>called</sup> <sup>"The</sup> <sup>Naughty</sup> <sup>Missionary"</sup> <sup>in</sup> <sup>his</sup> <sup>own</sup> <sup>country</sup>.

<sup>of</sup> ~~of~~ <sup>a</sup> ~~a <sup>book</sup> ~~book~~ <sup>by</sup> ~~by~~ <sup>Thomas</sup> ~~Thomas~~ <sup>himself</sup> ~~himself~~.~~





He wanted to get out of Shanghai, away from foreigners,  
away from the English club scenes, and "to live amongst the Chinese," especially  
Hondam-speaking Chinese, not the Shanghai dialect which he detested, as he wrote to his Board. But the Chinese he really wanted

was not the chief of Mission discipline, <sup>as he had</sup> ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> ~~not~~ <sup>not</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~chief~~ <sup>chief</sup> ~~of~~ <sup>of</sup> ~~Mission~~ <sup>Mission</sup> ~~discipline~~ <sup>discipline</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~visiting~~ <sup>visiting</sup> ~~ways~~ <sup>ways</sup> ~~second~~ <sup>second</sup>  
ranked <sup>and</sup> ~~small~~ <sup>small</sup>.  
Despite he had been in China a full year, he abruptly resigned from  
the Mission. One of his colleagues <sup>was just afterwards</sup> ~~wrote~~ <sup>finished</sup> ~~confidentially~~ <sup>of a</sup> ~~report~~ <sup>report</sup>  
return, "Mr. Thomas has left us and joined the Imperial Maritime  
Customs, which I think will suit him much better than Mission  
work." <sup>at least.</sup>

But ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> ~~before~~ <sup>before</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~next~~ <sup>next</sup> ~~month~~ <sup>month</sup> ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> ~~not~~ <sup>not</sup> ~~he~~ <sup>he</sup> ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> ~~back~~ <sup>back</sup> ~~fleed~~ <sup>fleed</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup>  
cheerful ~~missionary~~ <sup>missionary</sup> was back ~~pleas~~ <sup>pleas</sup> ~~ed~~ <sup>ed</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> ~~be~~ <sup>be</sup> ~~recounted~~ <sup>recounted</sup>. "By the way, the fact he  
asked. "I was, wish, too independent." <sup>it was not that he doubted the new</sup>

He had been offered by ~~him~~ <sup>him</sup> (later Sir Robert) ~~that~~ <sup>that</sup> ~~as~~ <sup>as</sup> ~~interpreter~~ <sup>interpreter</sup> ~~in~~ <sup>in</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~Customs~~ <sup>Customs</sup> ~~House~~ <sup>House</sup>  
at Chefoo. <sup>It was better</sup> ~~than~~ <sup>than</sup> ~~any~~ <sup>any</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~Mission~~ <sup>Mission</sup> ~~could~~ <sup>could</sup> ~~offer~~ <sup>offer</sup>, ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~it~~ <sup>it</sup> ~~gave~~ <sup>gave</sup> ~~him~~ <sup>him</sup>  
free run to his ~~long~~ <sup>long</sup> ~~desired~~ <sup>desired</sup> linguistic accomplishments which were ~~highly~~ <sup>highly</sup> ~~valued~~ <sup>valued</sup>. But  
he ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> ~~at~~ <sup>at</sup> ~~least~~ <sup>least</sup> ~~still~~ <sup>still</sup> ~~a~~ <sup>a</sup> ~~missionary~~ <sup>missionary</sup>. <sup>Said</sup> ~~me~~ <sup>me</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> ~~Mungana~~ <sup>Mungana</sup>, ~~he~~ <sup>he</sup>  
suggested. <sup>to</sup> ~~leave~~ <sup>leave</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~Mission~~ <sup>Mission</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~have~~ <sup>have</sup> ~~a~~ <sup>a</sup> ~~Lib~~ <sup>Lib</sup> ~~for~~ <sup>for</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~Mission~~ <sup>Mission</sup>.

Shanghai! <sup>The London Mission Society</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> ~~a~~ <sup>a</sup> ~~very~~ <sup>very</sup> ~~great~~ <sup>great</sup> ~~body~~ <sup>body</sup> ~~of~~ <sup>of</sup> ~~people~~ <sup>people</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~it~~ <sup>it</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> ~~very~~ <sup>very</sup> ~~valued~~ <sup>valued</sup> ~~in~~ <sup>in</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~Mission~~ <sup>Mission</sup> ~~at~~ <sup>at</sup> ~~least~~ <sup>at</sup> ~~in~~ <sup>in</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>in</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~road~~ <sup>road</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> ~~Mungana~~ <sup>Mungana</sup>.  
By the time he received the news, however,  
he had already been to Korea and back and was no longer entertained in Mungana.

The ~~fact~~ <sup>fact</sup> ~~Thomas~~ <sup>Thomas</sup> ~~left~~ <sup>left</sup> ~~for~~ <sup>for</sup> ~~Korea~~ <sup>Korea</sup>.  
The Society did take him back, very graciously indeed, and appointed him to Peking, which was at least  
the road to Mungana. But words were ~~sim~~ <sup>sim</sup> ~~ulated~~ <sup>ulated</sup> ~~by~~ <sup>by</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~time~~ <sup>time</sup> ~~he~~ <sup>he</sup> ~~rec'd~~ <sup>rec'd</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~news~~ <sup>news</sup>

- (21) Thomas to Tiden. Chiefs. Jan. 31, 1865.
- (22) Thomas to Tiden. Shanghai. May 5, 1864.
- (23) Dr. Henderson to LMS Shanghai. Mar 7, 1865.
- (24) RST to Tiden. Chefoo. Jan 31, 1865.
- (25) Robert Hart to Peking. Dec 8, 1864. <sup>and</sup> ~~you~~ <sup>you</sup> ~~see~~ <sup>see</sup> ~~Max~~ <sup>Max</sup> ~~Williamson~~ <sup>Williamson</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> ~~Tiden~~ <sup>Tiden</sup> ~~Chiefs~~ <sup>Chiefs</sup> ~~Jan~~ <sup>Jan</sup> ~~25~~ <sup>25</sup> ~~1865~~ <sup>1865</sup>
- (26) RST to Tiden. Jan 31, 1865. <sup>very</sup> ~~re~~ <sup>re</sup> ~~sent~~ <sup>sent</sup> ~~it~~ <sup>it</sup>. <sup>RST</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> ~~Tiden~~ <sup>Tiden</sup> ~~Jan~~ <sup>Jan</sup> ~~12~~ <sup>12</sup> ~~1865~~ <sup>1865</sup> "I arrived here in  
and today and only then learned the news that I had been appointed to the most interesting Mission."

then

Intrigued by the light of entry a land still closed to Protestants and entered by the rich priests only under cover, he

~~was~~ ~~found~~ ~~that~~ private trade with China, which ~~was~~ ~~of~~ ~~course~~, ~~forbidden~~ ~~by~~ ~~the~~ ~~authorities~~ ~~occupied~~ forbidden by Korean law but widely practiced. He learned to his surprise that they were Roman Catholic. Hidden within clothes they carried rosaries, crucifixes and saints' medals. They said there were 50,000 believers in Korea, mostly in private homes. In ~~the~~ ~~houses~~ they had no keys. They seemed more of our kind than Protestants, and when a blessing was ~~offered~~ <sup>performed</sup> before tea in a morning's hour, one of them offered prayer in Korean. (C. A. Lee, Esq. "The Hist. of the National Bible Society of Scotland", Part 2. 1809-1900" mss., hand typescript.)

Intrigued by the light of entry - land still closed to Protestants,

Pharmer introduced the two men to Alexander Walker, agent <sup>Chapman</sup> in charge of the National Bible Society of Scotland, and considering himself now a free agent, since he had not yet had from the C.M.S. promised permission to appoint him an agent of <sup>Scotland</sup> the Society to take Bibles to Korea. He played the same game for many years but he could get out of the anti-Christian country, giving the up.







THE M.A.S.

The Program Areas

try include ~~from~~ <sup>these</sup> basic program areas

- 1) A <sup>academic</sup> research and academic ~~center~~ ~~institute~~ degree awarding inst.
- 2) A research and training center for nursing students in Africa
- 3) A conference center for laymen and pastors.

1)

~~Robert~~  
Robert J. Thomas's first



THOMAS (2)

The second trip of the Rev. Robert G. Thomas to Korea ended in sheer tragedy on the mudbanks of the Taedong River, near Pyongyang.

The first visit, in the summer of 1865, had been an exhilarating success. In two and a half months he had explored the west coast of the forbidden country, learning the language and distributing Christian literature. At a few months after his return to Peking, <sup>when</sup> the annual Korean embassy arrived at the Chinese capital, Thomas was happy to hear from a Pyongyang merchant that his books had ~~circulated~~ been carried as far north as that ancient Korean city.

The man said he had come across one of his books there, read it, and found it good. "Yam kyo cheiki nien chosido," is how Thomas paraphrased ~~the~~ the merchant's comment, translating it, "The books of the doctor + Jesus are indeed excellent."

Thomas took books on his second trip, <sup>also</sup> in 1866, but his reception was very different. Mystery still shrouds what actually happened. My father D.S.A. Moffett came to Pyongyang less than twenty-five years after Thomas' death. He carried books with him, too, and <sup>on one of two occasions, Koreans told</sup> ~~some people occasionally an old man told~~ him they had seen books like that before. Where? Years ago, they said, they had watched a foreign ship bring on the Taedong River, and a white man stood on the busy deck, shouting "Jesus," and throwing books to the people on the shore. "His books were like your books," they told my father.

"What happened to the foreigner?" father asked.

"They like was killed," they said.

But at the time, it was not at all clear what had happened, and whether Thomas was dead or alive. He had sailed, <sup>against all odds</sup> in the General Sherman, <sup>a 150-ton, two-masted American</sup>



scholar  
~~ship~~ consigned to a British trading company in Chefoo. ~~Originally~~ It was the  
wrong time of the wrong ship.

Originally he had planned to go on a French naval vessel. In June,

a Korean junk had sailed into Chefoo harbor with a French trader at its  
pennant, carrying a French missionary, Father Regal, and  
news of what Thomas described as "a fine and ardent man... as a  
These were eleven Roman Catholic missionaries in Korea, he had heard. "For many  
years these devoted agents of the Papacy have hiddey themselves in that almost  
unknown & strictly watched Kingdom," he wrote ~~but now~~ ~~some~~ ~~tragic~~ ~~news~~ "Roman  
Catholic Bishops & seven missionaries have been barbarously tortured & beheaded."  
COST to Padua, Chefoo, Aug. 1, 1866). (It was the begining of the great Persecution of 1866

under the Prince-Regent, the Tosewon-kun, it was a good time for a missionary to try to  
enter Korea. But when the French Ambassador asked Thomas to ~~accompany~~ ~~the~~ ~~act~~ as  
interpreter for a retaliatory naval strike at ~~some~~ attempt (the French missionaries were  
said to be still hiding in the Korean hills), Thomas leaped at the chance.

In Chefoo however, he found that the French Admiral had been directed  
to Saigon by "a little insurrection" there. ~~Impatiently~~ ~~Thomas~~ ~~took~~ ~~leave~~  
Rashly impatient to return to Korea, Thomas ~~both~~ ~~wait~~ ~~for~~ ~~the~~ ~~French~~  
~~both~~ ~~passage~~ ~~waited~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~General~~  
"I have accepted a passage over to Corea on the schooner of  
a friendly English merchant. I take a good supply of books... & am quite sanguine  
that I shall be welcomed by the people," ~~he~~ ~~wrote~~ "I hope to meet  
the Admiral's fleet on the Corian coast..."

When the French, planning a retaliatory naval strike against Korea, asked Thomas  
"the only foreigner living with an acquaintance of the Korean court & language" to accompany the Admiral as  
interpreter, he leaped at the chance. ~~It was neither the time nor the circumstances for a~~  
new missionary venture to Korea. ~~The country was~~ ~~ruined~~ ~~by~~ ~~a~~ ~~war~~ ~~which~~ ~~had~~ ~~been~~ ~~for~~ ~~Christians,~~  
~~was~~ ~~being~~ ~~incidentally~~ ~~from~~ ~~was~~ ~~the~~ ~~deaths~~ ~~of~~ ~~many~~ ~~missionaries~~  
and oppression by an invading ~~army~~ ~~was~~ ~~no~~ ~~way~~ ~~to~~ ~~convert~~ ~~the~~ ~~people~~ ~~to~~ ~~Christianity.~~  
Even when the attack was postponed, and Thomas switched to a more innocuous-looking  
body vessel, the General Sherman, his colleagues tried to dissuade him from the venture.



~~where~~

should be among the books of a miserably, not a credit for him, and that

But against all advice, ~~Thomas~~ <sup>said Aug 9</sup> Thomas left in the 180 foot  
 ton mounted schooner ~~British~~ schooner, conveyed to a British ~~trading~~ company in ~~the~~  
 and had for three. It was never seen again by western eyes ~~My father still stands~~  
~~what actually happened~~. Reports filtered back that it had been attacked & destroyed, but the affair ~~and~~  
 empty. ~~in the first place, why was the Sherman attacked and its crew killed when only~~  
~~My father~~

~~Later father commenced the~~

~~is an effort to~~  
 A Korean club ~~the~~ <sup>history buff</sup>, Mr M, has ~~carefully~~ put together as

my pieces of the puzzle as he could find in an article, "The Two Deaths of the  
 Rev. R. J. Thomas to Korea" in the R.A.S. Transactions for 1933 (Vol 22). The Sherman  
 stopped first at Paek upon do island, proceeded to the mouth of the Taedong River, and  
 zig-zagged its way up the molten stream for "four tides", ~~there~~ <sup>there</sup> ~~ways~~, watched all the  
 way by curious crowds of sharp eyed magistrates. A report sent to Seoul ~~described~~  
~~the~~ ~~preparis~~. This is what they wrote about Thomas: "age 36, seven feet and five inches tall,  
 yellow hair, black beard, grey clothes, felt hat, black shoes, a British subject."

At one ~~the~~ place, a group of Catholics, ~~expectantly~~ ~~wondering~~ for ~~frankly~~ ~~help~~ ~~that~~ ~~the~~  
 ship was a French relief vessel, boarded it to seek help. Thomas comforted them, tried to explain  
 he was not a Catholic. ~~and gave them religion books and a silver coin with the portrait of Queen Victoria,~~  
~~but instead of giving them only copies of the Bible, he gave them a small book which he had not given them~~  
~~and the reason he really was really a French Catholic, for the same reason, namely a religion needed~~  
 being the blood of the Virgin Mary?

On Aug. 21, as the ship went Pyongyang an official police boat appeared to board  
 off the foreign ship. Its chief was mounted on board and roughly kept <sup>as</sup> hostage, while the Sherman  
 proceeded ~~and~~ ~~demanded~~ an interview with the Governor. European officials ordered the vessel ~~it~~ ~~should~~  
~~subsidy~~ flood waters gashed the vessel in the mud-banks. For two weeks, it desperately worked  
 off ~~consult~~ by ~~arms~~ and ~~gunfire~~. ~~Then~~ <sup>blazing</sup> pine boats were ~~set~~ ~~up~~ ~~and~~ ~~flashed~~ ~~down~~ ~~upon~~  
 the helpless ship, and it caught fire.





Thomas - Post. German.

Original correspondence in L.M.S. archives - Central China letters. Box A. 2.3 etc.  
North China letters " A 4.1

Xerox - Central Ch. letters B 2 3 Jan. 31, 1865 (p. 18)  
North Ch. letters A 5 1 Jun. 12, 1866 (p. 36)  
B 5 1 Apr. 4, 1866 (p. 38)  
C 5 1 Aug. 1, 1866 (p. 41)

Fletcher, I. M. "The Record of the Reverend R. Jermain Thomas as found in the Archives of the L.M.S."  
ms., compiled Aug. 1958

from Candidates' Papers, Eastern Committee Minutes: China, Deputation to India and China, 1865  
Central China letters (Box A. 2.3, B. 2.3), North China letters (A. 4.1, B. 4.1); Outgoing letters China,  
North China letters (A. 5.1, B. 5.1, C. 5.1)

Letters on 1865 trip to Korea: Jan. 12, 1866 (p. 36 f.), Apr. 4, 1866 (p. 30 f.).

Letter to go opium: Aug. 1, 1866 (p. 41 f.).

Report on death J. Sikens to Hudsons Oct 13, 1866 (p. 45)

May the Joy of Christmas  
be yours  
Throughout the Year

is the sincere wish of

The Carter Andersons



Frederick Lee 21 1/2

1942 - had 5 boxes...  
1943 - had 5 boxes...  
1944 - had 5 boxes...

1945 - had 5 boxes...  
1946 - had 5 boxes...  
1947 - had 5 boxes...  
1948 - had 5 boxes...  
1949 - had 5 boxes...  
1950 - had 5 boxes...

Went to...  
2-17-50

written for

Especially created by DICK KELSEY  
for California artists  
No. 45C-2727—MADONNA  
USA

writing desk practice

"I want to call the attention of the Directors to Corea. America has just concluded a treaty with Corea. England will follow immediately. Shall not the London Missionary Society be first on the field? First or not first is a matter of little importance. All I am anxious about is that we should enter ~~at~~ in at once. I tried to move the Directors to establish a mission in Japan, but in vain. I do trust they will not ignore the claims of Corea. The area is estimated at about 80,000 square miles, and the population is supposed to be about 10,000,000."

---

The above is from a letter from Griffith John on his return to China after furlough, on June 6, 1882. A Mission to Chungking was being planned about this time, but was awaiting the necessary recruits to go in; Griffith John also had his eyes on the province of Hunan.

In a personal letter to Dr. R. W. Thompson, Foreign Secretary, L.M.S. dated June 12, 1882, he writes:-

"..... Do send us the medical man as soon as possible, and let us begin the work in Sze-chwan..... I want to call your attention also to Hunan ... There is a city in Hunan, however, which will soon open its gates + think ..... Thus we are to establish three new central stations in China; one at Chungking in Sze-chwan, one at Chang-teh in Hunan, and one in Corea. This will cover the extent of our present ability so far as China is concerned."

In 1883, Dr. Wardlaw Thompson was in China, and in his report he discusses the needs of Mongolia, its claims on the L.M.S. and the work there of James Gilmour. He makes it quite clear that the L.M.S. should do more there than have a man itinerating for part of the year, and for the other part making contact with Mongolians in Peking.

The absence of any further reference to Corea makes it plain that it is without the realms of possibility for the L.M.S. to enter there, with its limited resources in men and money. Sze-chwan, Hunan, and Mongolia were all occupied; later proved too wide a scattering of forces, and were handed over to others.

So it must be understood that Griffith John's vision, as quoted from the letter of June 12, and his appeal of June 6, are personal to him, and as much to the glory of the L.M.S. as to God. There never was any practical possibility of the L.M.S. entering Corea, certainly not for glory when there was another Society ready and able to go.

I.M. Fletcher, Sept. 2, 1958

1870

Dear Mother  
I received your letter of the 10th and was  
glad to hear from you. I am well and  
hope these few lines will find you the same.

I have not much news to write at present.  
The weather here is very pleasant and  
I am enjoying my work very much.

I have not much news to write at present.  
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I am enjoying my work very much.

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